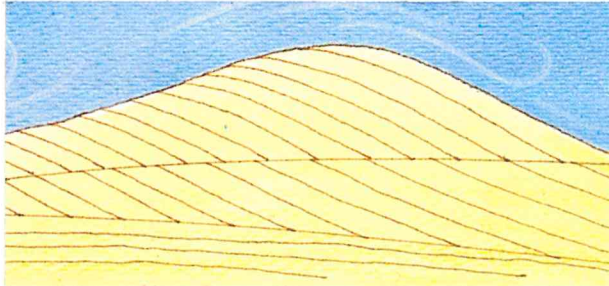


LIBRARY

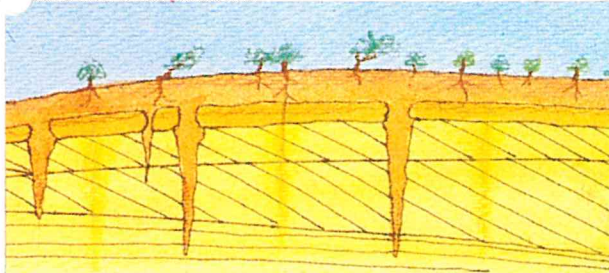
Department of Biodiversity,
Conservation and Attractions

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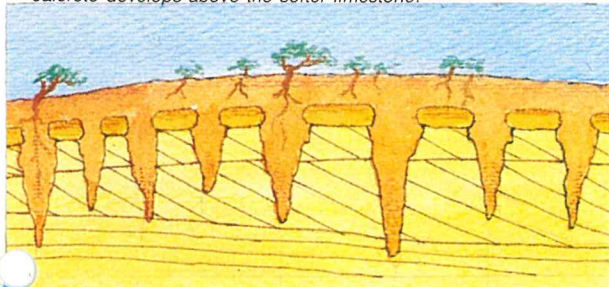
THE PINNACLES FORM



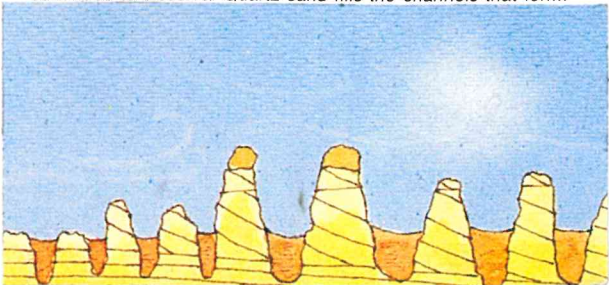
1. Lime leached from the sand by rain cements the lower levels in the dune into a soft limestone.



2. Vegetation forms an acidic layer of soil and humus. A hard cap of calcrete develops above the softer limestone.



3. Cracks in the calcrete are exploited by plant roots. The softer limestone continues to dissolve. Quartz sand fills the channels that form.



4. Vegetation dies, and winds blow away the sand covering the eroded limestone. The pinnacles appear.

REMEMBER

BE CAREFUL: Your enjoyment and safety in natural environments is our concern, but your responsibility.

BE CLEAN. Put your litter in bins, or better still, take it with you.

STAY COOL: Don't light fires. Bring your own portable gas stove.

PROTECT ANIMALS AND PLANTS: No firearms or pets . . . please.

STAY ON THE ROAD: Follow signs in the Park, and stay on the roads marked in this brochure. Normal road rules apply. Other tracks in the Park are not open for public use.

FURTHER INFORMATION

National Park Rangers are always glad to help make your visit more enjoyable and informative. Do not hesitate to contact them if you require any information or assistance.

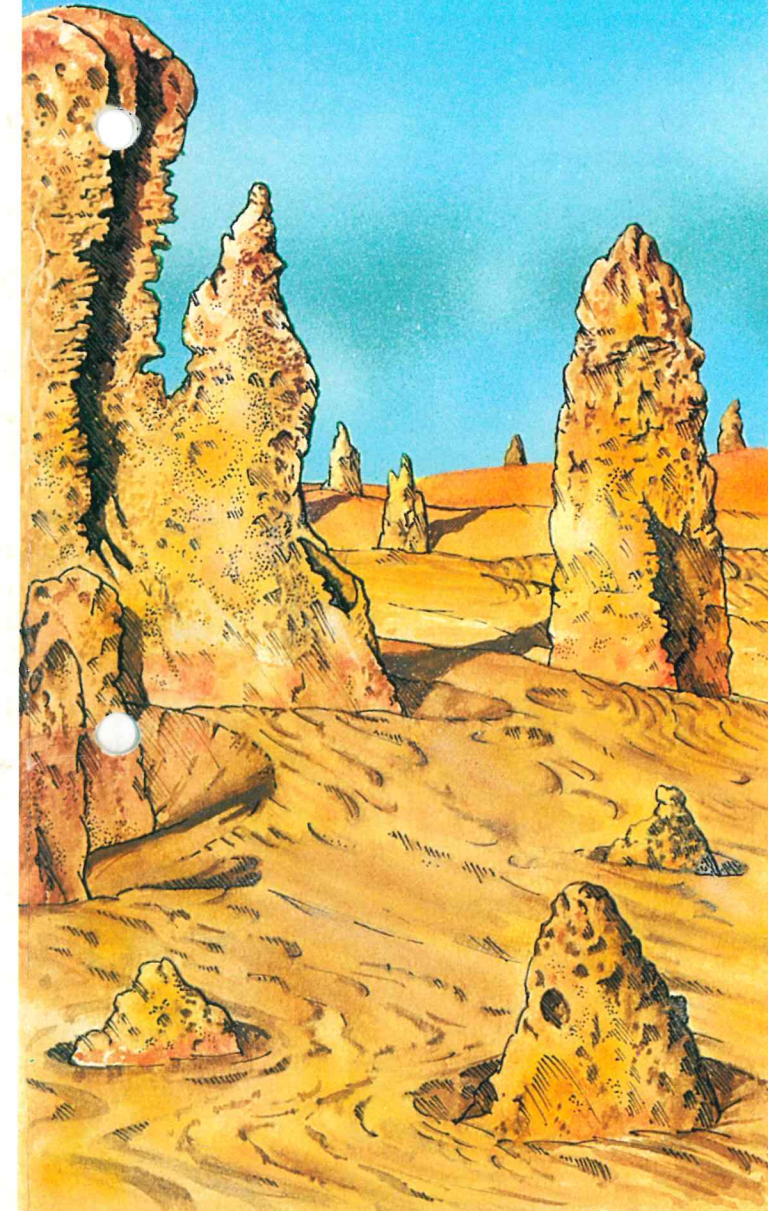
Department of Conservation and Land Management,
Drummond Circus, Cervantes, 6500. Ph: (095) 45 7043.

Greenough Regional Office,
P.O. Box 72, Geraldton, 6530. Ph: (099) 21 5955



Department of Conservation
and Land Management,
50 Hayman Road, Como, W.A. 6152
Telephone: (09) 367 0333.
1986

NAMBUNG NATIONAL PARK



Nambung National Park, on the Swan Coastal Plain 245 km north of Perth, contains one of Australia's most fascinating landscapes — the Pinnacles Desert.

Out of the shifting yellow sands rise thousands of huge limestone pillars, standing in stark contrast to the surrounding low heathlands typical of this coast.

The pinnacles often feature in tourist guides to the region, but they are only one part of the 17,491 ha National Park. Beautiful beaches, coastal dune systems, and trees and flowering plants typical of the northern coastal plain are all part of this Park.

Summer days between December and March are usually hot and dry, with an afternoon sea breeze. During this time the fire danger is often extreme. Wildlife rests during the heat of the day, and only appears in the cooler hours of early morning and evening.

Most of the annual 600 mm of rain falls between May and September. From September onwards the weather warms up, but the days are still mild, and native wildflowers throughout the area start their spring bloom. This is the best time of year to discover the pinnacles and explore the Park.

The Environment

Three old systems of sand dunes run parallel to the W.A. coast from Nambung to Busselton. These dunes, formed from wind-blown beach sand rich in lime, mark ancient shorelines on the Swan Coastal Plain.

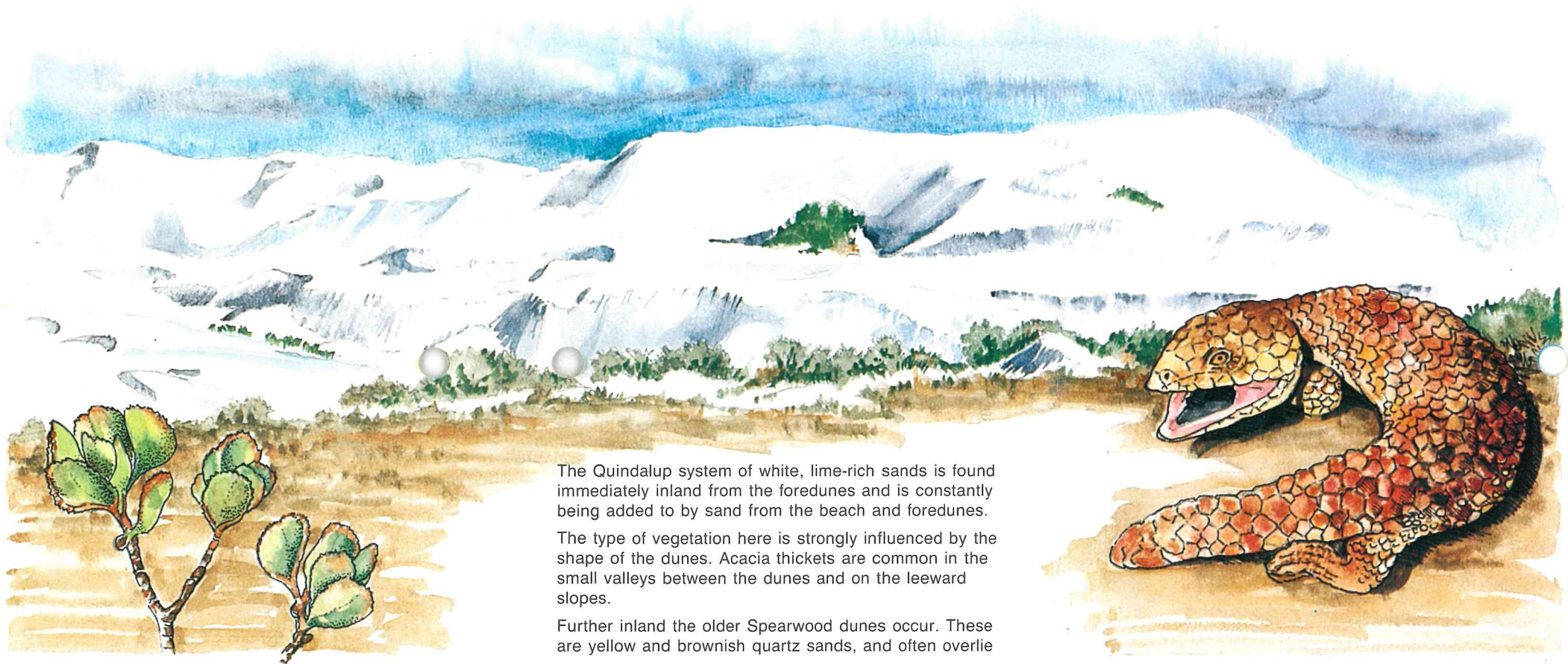
These dune systems become older and more gentle and undulating the further from the sea they are. The shape and character of these sands determines the plants that grow on them.

limestone. The pinnacles are the eroded remnants of what was once a thick bed of limestone beneath these sands.

Tuart woodlands occur in the valleys, but it is the low exposed heaths of acacia and myrtles extending inland to the Pinnacles Desert which dominate the landscape. Scattered over these low heaths grow casuarinas and banksias. The brilliant orange flowered *Banksia prionotes* is common.

The silica-rich sands of the Bassendean system are found on the east of the Park where the vegetation is low open banksia woodland.

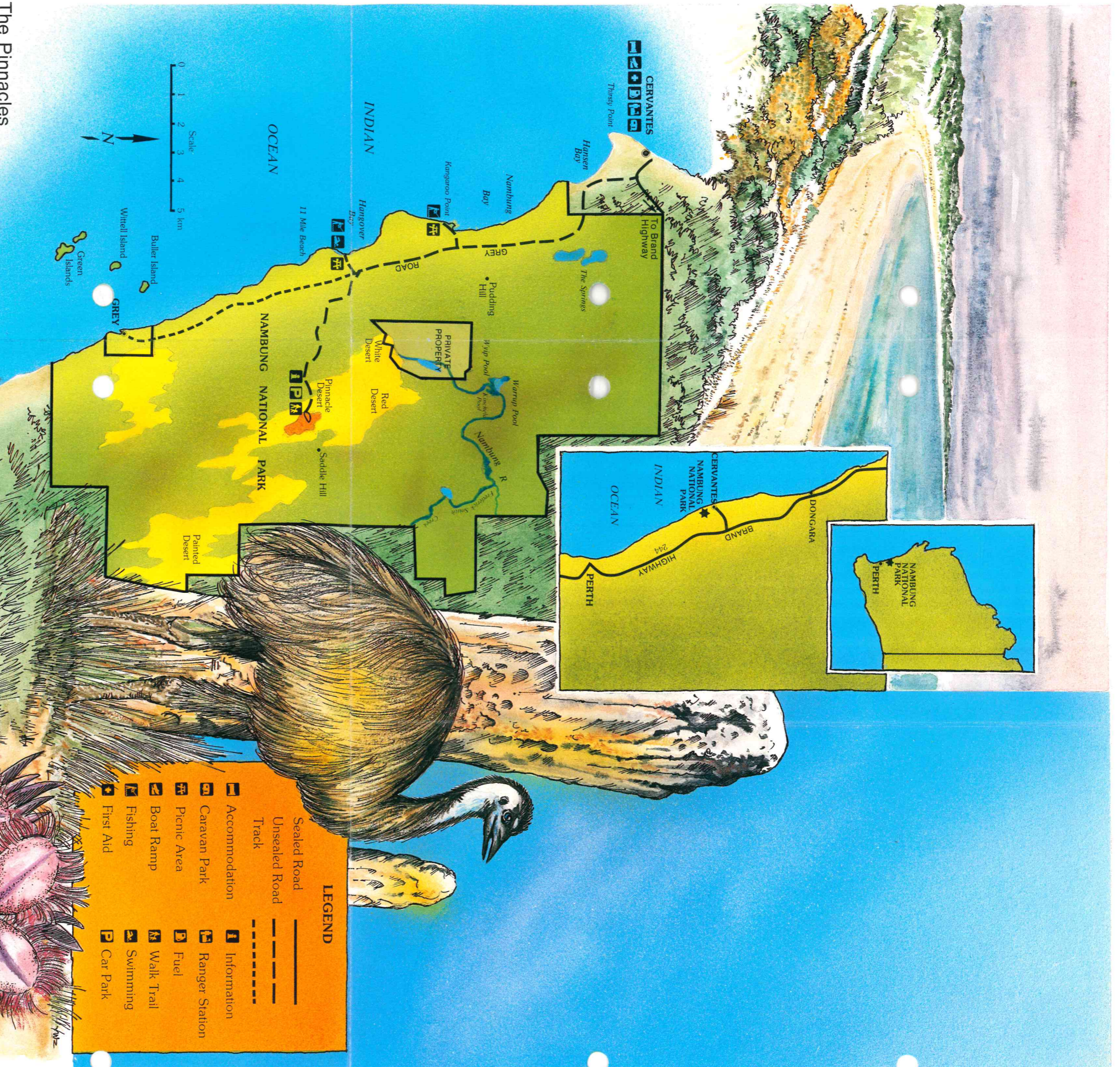
Most animals in the Park are nocturnal, but during the day you may see emus or western grey kangaroos. Reptiles of many sorts are common, particularly bobtail skinks and snakes. Over 90 species of birds common to the Swan Coastal Plain have been recorded in the Park.



The Quindalup system of white, lime-rich sands is found immediately inland from the foredunes and is constantly being added to by sand from the beach and foredunes.

The type of vegetation here is strongly influenced by the shape of the dunes. Acacia thickets are common in the small valleys between the dunes and on the leeward slopes.

Further inland the older Spearwood dunes occur. These are yellow and brownish quartz sands, and often overlie



The Pinnacles

The most popular attraction of the Park is the Pinnacles Desert. Thousands of limestone pillars up to four metres tall rise out of a stark landscape of yellow sand. Some are jagged, sharp-edged columns, rising to a point, others resemble tombstones. What exactly are the pinnacles? What natural processes have created these odd and spectacular structures?

The raw material for the limestone of the pinnacles came from sea shells in an earlier epoch rich in marine life. These shells were broken down into lime-rich sands which were carried inland by wind to form high mobile dunes.

Winter rain leached the lime from these sands, cementing grains of sand together in the lower levels of the dunes. Vegetation became established and stabilized the dunes. At the same time an acidic layer of soil and humus developed over the remaining quartz sand.

This acidic soil accelerated the leaching process, and a hard layer of calcrete formed over the softer limestone below. Today this calcrete can be seen as a distinct cap on many pinnacles and has helped protect the softer limestone below.

Cracks formed in the calcrete layer and were exploited by plant roots. Water seeped down along these channels to leach away the softer limestone below. The channels gradually filled with quartz sand. This subsurface erosion continued until only the most resilient columns remained. The pinnacles as we see them today were exposed by prevailing winds blowing away the overlying quartz sand.

THINGS TO SEE AND DO

Pinnacles Desert Loop Drive: A one-way loop track leads through the Pinnacles Desert. Large coaches (with carrying capacity greater than 24) cannot negotiate this track and should not proceed beyond the car park at the Pinnacles end of the road. The track is also not suitable for caravans and trailers and these should either be left in Cervantes or in the signposted parking bay at the Park entrance.

Walk Trail: A 500m loop walktrail starts opposite the car park. The trail is easy-going and leads to several lookout points from which there are superb views of the Pinnacles Desert and coast.

Fishing: Fishing is popular at Hangover Bay and Kangaroo Point. Normal fisheries regulations apply. Please note that the offshore islands are all nature reserves and to land you must have a permit.

Fires: Fires are not allowed in the Park at any time of year. Bring your own portable gas stove.

LEGEND

- | | | | |
|--|---------------|--|----------------|
| | Sealed Road | | Information |
| | Unsealed Road | | Ranger Station |
| | Track | | Fuel |
| | Accommodation | | Walk Trail |
| | Caravan Park | | Swimming |
| | Picnic Area | | Car Park |
| | Boat Ramp | | |
| | Fishing | | |
| | First Aid | | |

Camping: There is a small camping area in the Park but no facilities are provided. Ask the ranger's advice before camping in the Park.

Bushwalking: Bushwalking is encouraged in the Park. However, remember summer temperatures are very hot and no water is available. If you plan any lengthy walks please inform the ranger beforehand.

Roads: Access to the Park is via Cervantes and all roads in the Park are unsealed. South of Grey the coastal track is definitely 4WD only. Please note that just south of the Park is Wanagarren Nature Reserve. National park regulations apply in this area as well.

Supplies:

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| Petrol | Available in Cervantes |
| Medical treatment | Available in Cervantes |
| Motel Accommodation | Available in Cervantes |
| Caravan Park | Available in Cervantes |